

REMARKS

I. Status of the claims

Claims 1-22 are pending. No claims have been amended, cancelled, or added.

II. Summary of the Office Action

(i) Claims 1-5, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being allegedly anticipated by Vos *et al.* (WO 00/34518, published on June 15, 2000).

(ii) Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Vos *et al.*.

(iii) Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Vos *et al.* in view of Schena *et al.* (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 93, 10614-10619, 1996).

(iv) Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Vos *et al.* in view of Van Ness *et al.* (USP 6,248,521).

(v) Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Vos *et al.*.

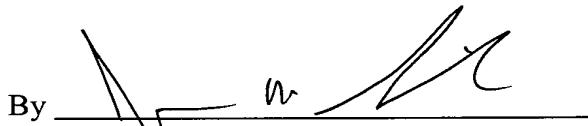
III. Vos *et al.* (WO 00/34518) is not prior art

As the Examiner correctly noted, Vos *et al.* is prior art as of its publication date, *i.e.*, June 15, 2000. However, the present application claims priority to three U.S. provisional applications, 60/193,042 filed March 29, 2000, 60/252,551 filed November 21, 2000 and 60/252,747 filed November 22, 2000. Applicant's claim for domestic priority was acknowledged by the Patent Office in Paper 7, dated February 25, 2002. Accordingly, the earliest effective filing date of the present application is March 29, 2000. Vos *et al.* is not prior art to the above-referenced applicatoin. Since Vos *et al.* is the primary reference in each rejection, and since Vos *et al.* is not available prior art, all of the rejections should be withdrawn.

IV. Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
40,413

Richard C. Peet
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 35,792

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FOLEY & LARDNER
Washington Harbour
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20007-5143
Telephone: (202) 672-5483
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399